

# *Louise Line*

***A periodic update from the front lines in Congress***

September 17, 2004 -- Vol. 2, No. 10

## ***News in Congress***

---

### **Third Anniversary of September 11**

On Saturday, September 11, the nation commemorated the third anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York City, Virginia and Pennsylvania. Louise offered her continued [condolences](#) to the families of those who lost their lives on that terrible day. In Congress, she has co-sponsored legislation that would implement all of the recommendations contained in the bipartisan 9/11 Commission's report.

### **Assault Weapons Ban Expires**

On Monday, September 13, the Bush Administration and the Republican leadership in Congress allowed the monumental assault weapons ban to expire. Now, these semi-automatic weapons, whose only purpose is to kill, are readily available to virtually any consumer. Louise stood with law enforcement organizations across the nation in supporting the ban and has co-sponsored legislation in Congress that would extend it. For more information, click [here](#).

### **A "Safety Web" for Western New York**

When the Stargazer Foundation, an Internet nonprofit, approached Louise's office about using its technologies to benefit first responders in Western New York, she got right to work. Louise, Stargazer and sheriffs in Erie, Monroe, Niagara and Orleans collaborated to create the "Safety Web for Western New York," an Internet portal that allows first responders to communicate and share information instantaneously. On September 13, Louise and the Stargazer Foundation leadership unveiled the technology in Rochester and Buffalo. For more information, click [here](#).

### **House Beats Back Overtime Regulations**

In August, the Bush Administration put in place new regulations that could jeopardize overtime pay for as many as 6 million American workers. Louise [stood](#) with local workers in Buffalo to protest these harmful new rules. Back in Congress, Louise voted for an amendment to the Labor/HHS Appropriations bill that blocked the rules. The House passed the measure, dealing a significant blow to the Administration. For more, click [here](#).

## **More Americans In Poverty, Without Health Insurance**

Earlier this month, the U.S. Census Bureau reported the sobering news that the number of Americans in poverty increased and a record number of people lack health insurance. In addition, women's wages declined for the first time in almost a decade. Click [here](#) for Louise's reaction to these troubling numbers, and [here](#) for the Census report.

## **Protecting Students from Credit Card Debt**

September means it's back to school. Unfortunately for too many college students, it's also back to a mountain of credit card debt. College students are easy prey for credit card companies, which can lure them with fun offers and free stuff. But there's nothing fun about graduating with thousands of dollars of credit card debt on top of your student loans. To combat this problem, Louise has introduced the [College Student Credit Card Protection Act](#) to crack down on student credit card debt.

## **Talking in Tonawanda**

Louise recently held a town hall meeting in the City of Tonawanda with Mayor Jack Gallagher. She talked about her work in Congress on health care, homeland security and job creation, and answered constituents' questions on Medicare, AmeriCorps and a variety of other topics.

## **Tired of Long Lines at the Border?**

Western New Yorkers know that simply crossing a bridge to and from Canada can take hours and hours because of congestion and long lines. Louise encourages her constituents to learn more about **NEXUS**, a joint program between the Canadian and U.S. customs and immigration authorities, designed to simplify border crossings for pre-approved, low risk travelers. As a **NEXUS** member, you will be able to use dedicated lanes at the Rainbow, Whirlpool and Peace bridges, and avoid going through the usual customs and immigration border process.

[Click here for a \*\*NEXUS\*\* application.](#)

[Click here for a \*\*Nexus\*\* FAQ sheet.](#)

## **Medicare Chief Told to Pay Back His Salary as Premiums Rise to Record Levels**

The General Accounting Office – Congress' investigative arm – found that the former head of Medicare, Tom Scully, misled Congress on the actual costs of the

Medicare overhaul bill and called for him to pay back part of his salary to make up for it. Scully was accused of knowing the bill would likely cost \$134 *billion* more than was reported and ordering his staff to keep the actual costs of the controversial bill a secret from Members of Congress, who were voting on the bill late last year. GAO found that Scully violated an appropriations law and urged HHS to recoup part of his \$145,000 salary.

HHS also recently reported that Medicare premiums for doctor visits will jump 17 percent next year – the largest in crease in history. Visits will cost \$11.60 more – jumping from \$66.60 to \$78.20.

## ***On the Record***

---

More News from Louise:

**Erie County:** [Rep. Slaughter Stands with Buffalo Workers to Denounce Overtime Regulations](#)

**Monroe County:** [Rep. Slaughter Announces Funding To Finish Algae Study At Ontario Beach](#)

**Niagara County:** [Rep. Slaughter Announces More Funding For Eighteenmile Creek Cleanup](#)

**Orleans County:** [Rep. Slaughter Attends Orleans County Wooden Boat Festival](#)

**Washington:** [Rep. Slaughter Applauds Women Olympians, Introduces Bill To Protect Girls' Sports](#)

## ***The Final Word***

---

"Too many OB-GYNs aren't able to practice their love with women all across this country."

- President Bush in a speech on health care costs, Sept. 6

---

To unsubscribe from these mailings, [click here](#) and fill in the necessary information

I cannot guarantee the integrity of the text of this message if it was not sent to you directly from my Congressional email account: [louiseny@mail.house.gov](mailto:louiseny@mail.house.gov). If you wish to contact me, please do so at <http://www.louise.house.gov/contact.htm>.  
Please do not reply to this message.